

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO
RICO-MAYAGUEZ CAMPUS, THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM, AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) is entered into as of the 13th day of June, 2000, between the NRCS Pacific Basin Area, hereinafter called the "Pacific Basin", the NRCS Caribbean Area, hereinafter called the "Caribbean", the NRCS Hawaii, hereinafter called "Hawaii," the NRCS Florida, hereinafter called "Florida", the University of Guam, College of Agriculture and Life Science, hereinafter called UOG", the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez, hereinafter called "RUM," the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, Program on Natural Resources and Environmental Management, hereinafter called "UH," and the University of Florida, hereinafter called "UF".

BACKGROUND:

The American islands in the Caribbean and Pacific Basins and the southern portions of the US mainland typify the diverse and fragile tropical agro-environments that produce a significant variety of the food, commodities, and products that Americans consume. In many of the islands, traditional plantation agriculture is now undergoing diversification to take advantage of tropical ecosystem characteristics such as year-round growing seasons and niche markets for tropical fruits, winter vegetables, and medicinal, ornamental, and aromatic plants. In addition, nontraditional land uses, such as aquaculture, recreation, and eco-tourism are becoming increasingly important.

Given the natural climatic extremes common to the tropics, tropical ecosystems are vulnerable to rapid and often irreversible degradation. Aggravating this predicament is the fact that conservation practices and techniques used in resource conservation are usually developed in temperate regions and as such are frequently not suitable for use in the tropics without modification or adaptation. For example, many elements of the soil, climate, topography, and crop parameters used in the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) are not available for tropical areas and extensive research and data gathering must occur to implement the model effectively for use in conservation planning. Additionally, considerable difficulties are experienced in the implementation of statutory programs such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program and National Resource Inventory because the parameters and recommendations for implementing these programs were designed for temperate continental areas. These programs and national initiatives are frequently ineffective in addressing tropical agricultural and environmental needs such as coastal and coral reef conditions, high rainfall, and fragile soil ecosystems causing inconsistent results and inaccurate assessments.

Therefore, it has become increasingly clear to the NRCS leadership and university partners in the Pacific Basin, Caribbean, Hawaii, and Florida that developing a cooperative environment is both important and timely. This cooperative effort in applicable technology development and information sharing will occur where it can take advantage of mostly existing efforts and facilities.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this MOU is to establish the Tropical Natural Resources Technology Consortium, hereinafter called the "consortium", between NRCS in the Pacific Basin, Caribbean, Hawaii, and Florida, and the UOG, RUM, UH, and UF. The consortium is intended to cooperate in and encourage the development and dissemination of tools and information needed by the people of the tropics to foster a policy and practice of sound ecosystem management and resource conservation. This initiative provides the parties a process for a coordinated transfer of technology in tropical areas.

The consortium members will work together and other appropriate agencies and institutions to support the functions and activities needed to:

- collect, synthesize and disseminate information;
- adapt and, if necessary, develop land management technology for the biophysical and socioeconomic environments of tropical areas;
- assist in the assessment, monitoring, protection, and restoration of natural resources;
- provide technical support services, such as training, assistance in the application of new technologies, and database management; and
- demonstrate appropriate conservation practices at representative sites.

IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED THAT ALL PARTIES WILL:

- Cooperatively work, through jointly designed programs and projects, to support the intent and purpose of the consortium and this MOU.
- Cooperatively establish by-laws to govern the function and operation of the consortium.
- Share information and expertise developed as a result of the cooperative projects of the consortium.
- Annually review the development of projects identified as high priority, progress and accomplishments of existing projects, staffing needs, and future plans developed to implement the purposes of this MOU.

The program or activities conducted under this memorandum of understanding will be in compliance with the non-discrimination provisions as contained in the Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes, namely Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A and B) which provide that no person in the United

States shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

EXECUTION, MODIFICATION, AND DURATION OF MOU:

This MOU shall become effective when executed by the parties hereto and shall continue in force until terminated in writing. Amendments to this MOU may be proposed by any party and shall become effective upon approval by all parties. This MOU may also be mutually terminated by agreement of the parties, after providing the other parties thirty (30) days written notification. In addition, any party may withdraw from participation in this cooperative effort upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other parties.

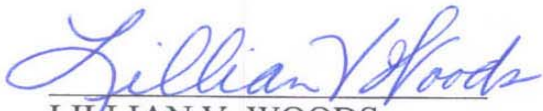
To effectively implement this basic MOU, the signatories and their partners may choose to enter into further detailed or more specific agreements. This document constitutes a statement of intent to cooperate in the above areas and is not to be construed as an instrument to exchange funds or commit resources for any purpose.

SIGNATURES

To facilitate the signing process, each NRCS state or area and the corresponding university has signed on individual pages.

- The NRCS Pacific Basin Area and the University of Guam on page 3.
- The NRCS Caribbean Area and the University of Puerto Rico – Mayaguez Campus on page 4.
- The NRCS Hawaii and the University of Hawaii on page 5.
- The NRCS Florida and the University of Florida on page 6.
- Concurrence by the NRCS Southeast Region Office on page 7
- Concurrence by the NRCS West Region Office on page 8.

NRCS PACIFIC BASIN AREA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



LILLIAN V. WOODS

Director

NRCS Pacific Basin Area

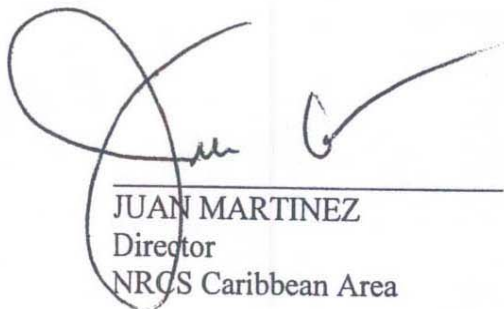


JEFF D. T. BARCINAS

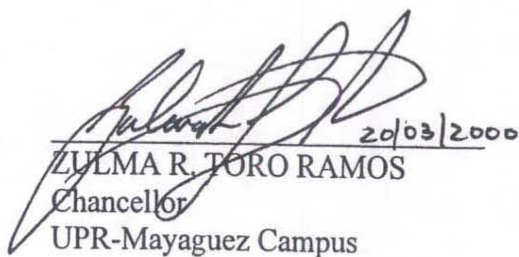
Dean/Director

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
University of Guam

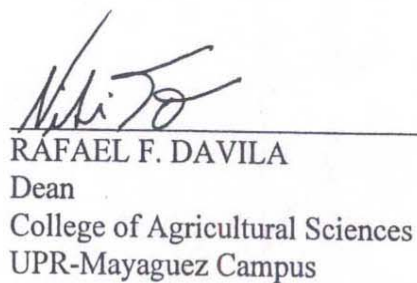
NRCS CARRIBBEAN AREA AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO AT MARAGUEZ CAMPUS



JUAN MARTINEZ
Director
NRCS Caribbean Area



ZULMA R. TORO RAMOS
Chancellor
UPR-Mayaguez Campus



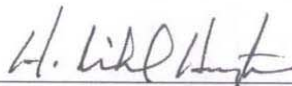
RAFAEL F. DAVILA
Dean
College of Agricultural Sciences
UPR-Mayaguez Campus

NRCS HAWAII AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

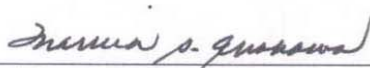
MOU Tropical Natural Resources Technology Consortium



KENNETH M. KANESHIRO
State Conservationist
NRCS Hawaii




H. M. HARRINGTON
Interim Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human
Resources, for the Department of Natural
Resources and Environmental Management
University of Hawaii



MARVIN ENOKAWA
Director
Office of Research Services
University of Hawaii

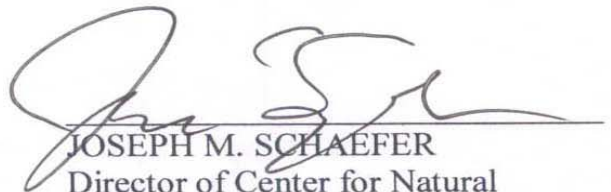
NRCS FLORIDA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



NILES GLASGOW
State Conservationist
NRCS Florida



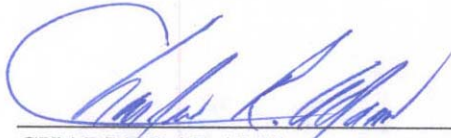
MICHAEL V. MARTIN
Vice President for Agriculture and
Natural Resources
Institute of Food and Agricultural
Sciences
University of Florida



JOSEPH M. SCHAEFER
Director of Center for Natural
Resources
Institute of Food and Agricultural
Sciences
University of Florida

NRCS SOUTHEAST REGION OFFICE

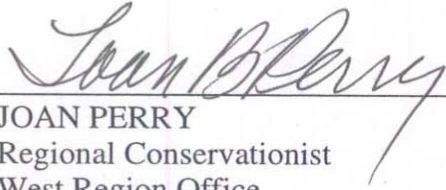
Concurred by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles Adams", is written over a horizontal line.

CHARLES ADAMS
Regional Conservationist
Southeast Region Office
USDA – NRCS

NRCS WEST REGION OFFICE

Concurred by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joan Perry", is written over a horizontal line.

JOAN PERRY
Regional Conservationist
West Region Office
USDA – NRCS